Development of newly discovered Shiva Temple near Amarnath

953. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a historic Shiva cave temple complex believed to be 1,500 years old has been discovered in Chandanwari near the holy cave of Amarnath in South Kashmir;

(b) if so, the circumstances leading to the discovery; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken to develop the new found caves into a tourist attraction?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. However the historicity of the site has not been established.

(b) As per information furnished by the State Government, the existence of the caves was first reported by a 'Bakarwal' in August, 2001.

(c) The matter is being looked into further, in consultation with the State Govt.

Preservation of ancient Monuments in Orissa

954. SHRI RANGANATH MISRA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to undertake schemes for effective preservation of the ancient monuments of Hindus, Budhists and Jains located in different parts of Orissa;

(b) if so, what steps have been/are being taken for adequate preservation; and

(c) the reasons for not establishing higher grade establishment with adequate funds for such purpose?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) The Archaeological Survey of India has 73 centrally protected monuments in Orissa.